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My Note Book.

Leonato.—Are these things spoken, or do I but dream?
Don John.—Sir, they are spoken, and these things are true.
 —*Much Ado About Nothing.*



HERE is much interior church decoration doing in New York just now, and it is interesting to note the extent of improvement in that direction consequent to our assumed art progress. In the Church of the Ascension, McKim, Meade & White are putting in a Gothic reredos of Sienna marble, and Mr. Lafarge is to supply the altar picture, which decorative feature, by the way, serves in many churches now in place of the big east window. It is so in the Church of the Incarnation, which is also to have an altar painting by Mr. Lafarge. Comment on the character of the new decorations of the latter edifice must be deferred until one can see the picture; for the decorations, of course, are only a setting for it. But one is bound to notice the slovenly way in which the work has been executed, with overlapping stencilling and the use of cheap Dutch metal instead of gold leaf.

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FROM such elaborate modern edifices it is interesting to turn to the quaint and time-honored wooden structure, St. Mark's Church. The interior is under treatment by that conservative and very capable decorator, Mr. E. J. N. Stent, who is engaged in the difficult task of reconciling the artistic requirements of the present congregation with the somewhat uncompromising exigencies of the old lines laid out by the original architect. Mr. Stent—or rather I might say the patient—is doing as well as could be expected. The church cannot possibly be made an artistic success. The Winthrop, Laurence and Pinckney memorial windows are delightful examples of old English stained glass; but there are others, put in later, which it must be very dreadful to sit and to look at—particularly that “chef d'œuvre” of some Frenchman, a white-robed angel, with the most wonderful cruciform nimbus that ever was seen. Mr. Stent has done a good thing in taking out the plain windows with borders of crude blue and green and substituting the little tinted squares ranging in color from dull pale yellow to olive green.

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THE house of the late Mrs. Morgan is literally honeycombed with secret closets and drawers filled with works of art of the most varied kind. Since the first inventory was made there have been several supplements. Now the total value is put down at something like four million dollars. Among the surprises was the finding a portfolio of etchings, including sets of Dürer, Cranach, Goltzius, Schöngauer, Rembrandt and Millet, and rare and fine proofs of some of the best works of Seymour Haden, Jacque, Coröt, Daubigny and Bracquemond. With other prints, including engravings of a more commercial kind, these are valued at \$100,000. In one bill Mrs. Morgan bought prints of Mr. Keppell to the value of \$45,000. It is said, by the way, that Mr. Schaus bought the famous “Domer,” by Rembrandt, for which he paid \$60,000, in the hope of selling it to Mrs. Morgan. But about that time her house was crowded with pictures for which she could find no wall-room, and she had stopped buying for a while. He had sold her one bill of paintings amounting to about \$350,000, and there seemed to be no limit to the length of her purse or her pride of acquisition. Mr. Schaus had the courage to buy pictures no other dealers dared to bring over on speculation, and he profited by his pluck. He may yet get back the money he paid for the Rembrandt.

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WITH the advent of Mr. Schaus it can be said that the leading picture dealers now all have their galleries in Fifth Avenue. The rooms of the new-comer are second in importance to none, and they are filled with a choice collection of foreign works, including fine examples of Van Marcke, Schreyer, Coröt, Vibert, Maurice Leloir, Perrault, Palmaroli, Casanova, Lhermitte and Diaz. Most interesting to artists, perhaps, will be De Neuville's large water-color painting on canvas—a new departure. It represents a squadron of German cavalry busy along the sea-shore, cutting the telegraph wires of a fishing village. The canvas is of very fine texture, and the water-color wash hardly loses its transparency; the high lights are loaded with Chinese white. The picture holding the place of honor is a striking work by Von Stettin. The corpses of young Biton and Cleobis

lie side by side in the foreground, meeting the gaze of their horrified mother, who stands at the portal, rooted to the spot. You may remember the story. The sons of Cydippe yoked themselves to her wagon instead of the tardy oxen, and brought the priestess to the temple in time to perform her sacred offices. According to Herodotus, who tells the tale, she prayed to the gods to reward them by doing for them what was best for them; and, in answer to her prayer, on her return from the temple, she found the youths asleep in death.

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THE art collection of the late George Whitney, of Philadelphia, in which are some fine paintings, is to be sold at auction in December at Chickering Hall.

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CHICAGO has just had a notable six weeks' exhibition in the Art Hall of the Inter-State Industrial Exposition. The committee were Mr. James H. Dole, Chairman, and Messrs. Charles L. Hutchinson, Harry Field, and Walter C. Larned; and Miss Sara Hallowell was, as usual, secretary and chief worker. Largely due to the personal efforts of that extremely intelligent and energetic lady, Chicago this year has anticipated New York, Boston and Philadelphia in exhibiting the important American pictures from the last “Salon.” It was determined to have, so far as practicable, the most important American paintings that have been seen in New York of late. One of these was Dannat's famous Spanish tavern scene “The Quartette.” Mr. Schaus—who could afford to be more liberal, by the way—asked a round sum for the loan of the picture. But it was paid—about \$1000 I am told—and a side-show, with an admission fee of ten cents, was devised to meet the extra expense. Bravo, Chicago! and particularly bravo, Miss Sara Hallowell!

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HENRY MOSLER's change of plan in showing his pictures and studies at the National Academy of Design instead of under the auspices of the American Art Association, is due to the difficulty of making his arrangements for exhibiting in other cities fit with the dates offered him by the latter. The Academy is too large a place for a special exhibition of this kind; but Mr. Mosler's pictures should attract attention anywhere.

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A SPRING exhibition of the paintings of J. Appleton Brown, at Doll & Richards's galleries in Boston, is as regular as the season itself. In November, however, he will have a second exhibition, not of oil paintings, but of pastel drawings, to which he has been chiefly devoting himself during his summer vacation in Warwickshire. He is now on his way across the Atlantic, and his friends say that his work will “make a sensation.” It is a pity Mr. Brown is not better known in New York than he is.

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AS the administration of the Luxembourg Gallery buys pictures from living artists only at nominal prices, in consideration of the honor conferred of according them a place on its walls, it is without examples of some of its famous men who have valued their pictures more than the honor. Among the painters unrepresented are De Neuville and Detaille. The Paris correspondent of the New York Times, noting this fact, says that “it is now stated” that the Museum will buy a picture of De Neuville, “and rumor warrants the belief that the large canvas of the Bourget, belonging to an American dealer, will be the desired choice.” This is a mistake. “Le Bourget” is owned by Mr. W. H. Vanderbilt, and it is not at all likely that it will be taken from his Fifth Avenue gallery to adorn the Luxembourg or any other museum.

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THE Parisian civic authorities have been making a valuation of the art property in their charge. The churches are said to contain works of art to the value of \$1,500,000, and among other items are \$276,800 for the sculpture of the Hôtel de Ville and \$66,500 for the monument upon the Place de la République. Now, what do you suppose the works of art in New York worth, including the Burns and Fitz-Greene Halleck statues?

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THE dispersion at auction, by Messrs. Bangs & Co., of the library of the late Richard Grant White, to begin November 16th, will doubtless attract much interest. That Mr. White—himself a violinist of no mean ability—was a connoisseur in old musical instruments is well known, and probably there will be lively competition for the possession of some of the objects in his choice little

collection. Several pages of the catalogue of the sale are given to his collection of prints, and there is also a score or more of oil paintings, in which, by the way, J. Alden Weir's portrait of Mr. White is not included.

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AN admirably life-like portrait of Judge Rapallo, of the Court of Appeals, has just been completed by J. Carroll Beckwith. It will be first exhibited at the Manhattan Club, where there is a portrait by the same artist of the President, Mr. Vanderpool. Mr. Beckwith has posed his sitter with conventional ease in an old-fashioned rocking-chair placed on the rich green sward of the judge's country retreat near Bridgeport, Conn. The open-air feeling about the picture is very agreeable.

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SPEAKING of the woes of the decorator who has to reconcile his art with the ignorant views of his “newly gilded clients,” a writer in the New York Star says: “The art director of the Gobelin manufactory can distinguish 14,500 different colors and tints. Think of a groceryman who is so color blind that he cannot tell a green tomato from a ripe one when he's selling it wrestling with this art director on the subject of parlor fresco!”

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OUR chemical experts differ as to what should be done to check the disintegration of the Obelisk in Central Park. Winter will soon be here, and it is certain that something should be done at once to exclude moisture from the pores of the stone; for water expands ten per cent in freezing, and before it can be dried out of the cells it does serious damage. “Buttering” the Obelisk with melted paraffine wax is proposed by Professor Doremus. In the opinion of Professor Chandler, however, this would be risky, the proposition being to prepare the surface by heating it by means of portable charcoal furnaces; and unless this be done with extraordinary care there will be unequal expansion, and the stone will “crackle and crumble.” The buttering process was tried on a fragment of the monolith at the time of the arrival of the monument in this country, the stone readily absorbing the melted wax. But what proved successful as an experiment on a small scale might not be successful when the entire surface would have to be treated by a different method of application. It is necessary to proceed with great caution.

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THE shrewd manager of Mary Anderson has engaged in a little “art” enterprise as a side show, to help business at his theatre. He has hired a room at Haines' piano store in Union Square, and will exhibit there, for an admission fee, what appears to be a statue of the actress. In point of fact the “statue” is nothing but a life-sized “carbon print,” made in three pieces, neatly joined, and artistically touched up in monochrome, by Mr. Van der Weyde, an American well-known in London as the first to take photographic portraits by electric light. The mock “statue,” as it is set between two real plaster casts from the antique, is wonderfully deceptive, and the success of the trick is enhanced by curtain drapery, mysterious lighting, and a guard rope set at a proper distance to keep the visitor from going too near the object. In London the white glare of the electric light aided the illusion; but here gas is to be used. Mr. Van der Weyde “took a run over” to New York with Mr. Abbey “to set the show going,” and then departed.

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DR. BIGELOW, an enthusiastic and judicious Boston collector of Oriental art objects, who has been away several years in Japan adding to his cabinet, met recently with a serious loss in Tokio. Thieves got access to the place where he had stored his acquisitions, and stole many of the most valuable of the smaller objects. The doctor's collection is particularly rich in lacquers and ivories.

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IF there is a good collection of Oriental porcelains anywhere in Europe which by the remotest chance may come into the market, it is pretty certain to be gobbled by one or another of a little group of American dealers with a special gift for scenting out such opportunities. The latest find is Dr. Ernest Hart's splendid case of Chinese porcelains—chiefly pieces of “solid color”—which for the past year has been on exhibition in London, at the South Kensington Museum. One of the firm of Herter Brothers, being in London, heard by chance that the owner just then was enthusiastic on the subject of Japanese art, and concluded that he might be willing to part with his Chinese objects. The Museum author-

ities scouted the idea that Dr. Hart's collection on loan there could be had for money; but application was made to him direct, and the transportation to New York of the case with all its contents was the result of the investigation. Many of the specimens can easily be surpassed by those in American collections; but there are others probably unique. One is a large globular piece of a remarkably soft and beautiful green of indescribable shade—ranging somewhere between a pea green and an apple green. Among other remarkable objects are a sixteenth century Imperial blue and white vase, eighteen inches high, with orange-peel surface and figure decoration; a peacock blue vase, twenty inches high, encompassed by a highly decorative design in flat relief; and a very curious little vase of black glaze, with white relief decoration, on which again is blue decoration over red lines. The last-named object, dating back to the Ming dynasty of the period of Cheng Duk, is a technical puzzle probably no modern potter could solve.

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IT is rather inconsistent with all one has heard about the improvement of artistic taste in England to read in that excellent English publication, *The Journal of Decorative Art*, about the "landscape carpets" produced at a leading Kidderminster factory. "This house," we are told, "makes no common carpets, but confines itself to art carpets, in which line it defies all competition." "And all principles of decorative design," the editor might have added.

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WILLIAM PAGE, who died in poverty and obscurity recently at his residence in Staten Island, at one time made something of a stir in the little art world of old New York. He painted both portraits and landscapes after peculiar theories of his own; but it cannot be said truthfully that he did either particularly well. Yet he was a man of more than ordinary ability, and had conscientiously studied the anatomy of pictures. He was a devout admirer of Titian, and, on one occasion, bought an undoubted canvas of the master for no other purpose than to dissect it in the hope of discovering the principle of his color. If he succeeded, he certainly did not profit by the discovery. Page's friends used to tell a story to the effect that the Italian authorities once seized a copy of a Titian he had made, supposing it to be the original; but this was quite a tax on the credulity of those familiar with the work of both painters. MONTEZUMA.

ART IN BOSTON.

FRIENDS of art in America are always on the lookout for the appearance of two great things—the American play and the American historical painting. Every now and then the cry is raised that one or the other is here—has arrived at last! Those whose enthusiasm and confidence are still young and unabused flock with faith and hope to the sight. Perhaps a generous exaltation, born partly of sympathy with the author or artist or with our beloved country, with all her havings still lacking a national art, leads us to believe for a while that here indeed the national art is born; but always hitherto the dismal realization has followed not long after that it is not what was to come, and we must still wait. The latest false alarm has been raised over a notable painting, exhibited the past week at the Art Club, by Henry Sandham, the English illustrator. Mr. Sandham is an Englishman, it was admitted, but so are most of us a few generations farther removed; and as he has cast his lot with us and has studied and drawn in his pictures every phase of American scenery and life from the deserts of New Mexico to the backwoods of Maine, from the Atlantic coast cities to the Indian warfare of the Plains and the Rocky Mountains, he will pass for a very good American worker in art. His subject in this great canvas is surely national—the Battle of Lexington. But—well, what is the matter? Is it not that battle—the mere battle of soldiery—does not well typify Americanism? Not that we have not done plenty of fighting from the period of Miles Standish to that of General Washington, and to that of General Grant, and as good fighting as ever was done in the world! Yet deep down is the consciousness that that sort of struggle is a mere survival from the old world, an accident, an exotic here; that the real warfare we wage on the American continent, in the nineteenth century and onward, is infinitely grander, more serious, more significant—the battle with the forces of nature, the contention of economic and social questions, the subduing and assimilation by intellectual and moral culture

of the currents of humanity itself pouring upon us from all the world, from Asia as well as from Europe. The old combats of Agincourt and Crecy, with their hand-to-hand struggles between man and man, are not more inadequate to represent the war of the present era, with scientifically disposed battalions that have become immense machines, armed with weapons reaching a mile or more, and personal prowess entirely supplanted by implements of precision, than any battle-scene is to represent the shock of the contending forces which have made and are making America what it is to-day and what it shall be to-morrow. The true American historical subject should be sought in the Senate-house and the town-meetings, in the inventor's workshop, in the whirl and fury of the stock exchange, the bridging of gorges and tunneling of mountains, the grain fields of the size of whole counties, the mines and factories, the labor-strikes, the emigrant train, the wharves and marts of trade; and the heroes should be the intellectual giants who have ruled their fellows, the great inventors, the reformers—men and women both—the philanthropists at their work, the merchants and the engineers—yes, even the speculators and the politicians, if we are to give the full drama of American life. In that life war is but an episode and interruption, entered on reluctantly and despatched as soon as possible. What an anachronism to go on following the footsteps of the great painters of the day when war was the chief business of all gentlemen into our day, when well-to-do citizens very properly hire "substitutes," and our greatest general and hardest fighter was a man who himself loathed military display, and whose first care, when his task was completed, was to make the citizen armies disappear as rapidly as possible! So Mr. Sandham's work, though well done enough, is not of very striking import, but on the old conventional lines. As painting it has the fault noticed in the paintings of most men who are primarily illustrators—namely, lack of color. To be sure, the hour of earliest dawn justifies the prevailing gray tone; but there is a poverty in the color-scheme for which the morning light does not wholly account. The dramatic conception is the strong part of the work. The spectator is on the flank of the rude line of farmers and farmers' boys, who occupy the left of the picture. The conventional revolutionary grandsire, bare-headed and white-haired, is prominent in the group; but his exaltation and determination of expression and attitude, and the postures and expressions of the falling and dying, are as genuinely felt, as ably wrought out, and appeal to the heart as the conventional posing in old-fashioned battle scenes does not. The pathos of a rustic tragedy is well depicted; but, on the other hand, the composition is weak and draws apart, for the line of red-coats firing at the smoke-wreathed band of patriots is as much too far away as the mounted major commanding them is too near—placed there evidently to fill up the otherwise empty right half of the canvas. The drawing of the figure is excellent throughout, but there is nothing of the mastery in textures and realistic detail seen, even in the stress and confusion of deadly fight, in the great contemporary French battle-painters, compared with whose work this would be accorded the rank of a spirited sketch only.

One of the most interesting exhibitions seen in Boston for many a day is the landscape work executed by W. Allan Gay during his long residence for the purpose in Japan and China. Mr. Gay is one of the soundest of American landscapists. He was among the first to go from Boston to France instead of Italy for training, and partook of the modern movement in France in the school of which Troyon and Rousseau were the great lights, sharing with his friend, W. M. Hunt, the teachings and companionship of the brilliant circle whose headquarters made Barbazon famous twenty-five years ago. He evidently mastered there the just then rediscovered secret of "values," and learned the importance of the "masses," and the "impression" as the foundation of a landscape. His color, too, is of that untortured freshness and that simplicity which characterize the best modern French landscape school. These pictures of Japan, therefore, carry conviction at once that they are trustworthy transcripts of nature, and it is truly exciting to stand before them, truthfully quiet as they are, and realize for the first time just what manner of country it is from which come to us the wonderful art productions over which the western world has gone daft of late years. After all, one perceives the earth's surface is pretty much the same all over. Here are green fields and trees and hills, coves and nooks that might have been painted in New Jersey or in Connecticut along the Sound. Only Fusiyama's

snow-capped cone—and it isn't quite so mathematically conical as it appears on the lacquer or prints of Japan—makes the difference. Yes, there is another great difference, in man's structures, which appears in the landscapes. The houses and bridges are always of pretty, fancifully perked-up shapes in one way or another. The roofs are curled or pinched up at the corners in prankish forms and the bridges are bowed up steeply in the middle. Everything in the way of edifices seems to be on a diminutive scale; the general effect of the large towns depicted is of such villages as children build with playing-cards. Some of the views in the city streets, especially those where the paper lanterns are lighted, have the strangeness and richness which one associates with the Japan of the museums and bric-à-brac shops; but here, still, the conviction is enforced that the effect is the very truth of the matter, and nothing else. The collection is very large, too various and crowded, perhaps, for the artist's interest; and the impression of monotony is produced by the steady sobriety and truth of the coloring. But it has been a fine "card" for the opening of the pretty galleries of Williams & Everett's new store.

The next event of interest here is the opening, the coming week, at the Museum of Fine Arts, of the exhibition of English water-colors brought over by Mr. Henry Blackburn, compiler of London art exhibition catalogues. The list of pictures certainly includes the names of the leading and well-known representatives of this great branch of English art. It remains to be seen whether they are here at their best. The Boston public has had very little experience at first hand with contemporary English art, and that little has not inclined it to change its predilection for the French. Indeed, German, Dutch, and even Russian painting is better known by examples here than English. The growing interest and practice in water-color in this country have caused this exhibition to be looked forward to with a very sympathetic and intelligent curiosity, and it is hoped that it may prove a fountain of inspiration.

The Art Museum school of drawing and painting is flourishing as usual, as indeed are all the multiplied schools, gathering pupils from all parts of the country. At the Museum Mr. Frederick Crowninshield has resigned his instructorship, and his resignation has been accepted, and Mr. Robert Vonnob has been added to the corps, at the head of which remains that faithful and able teacher, Mr. Otto Grundmann.

There is a little émeute among the architects of Boston over the suspension of the competition for the new Court House, and one disappointed firm of young architects has obtained an injunction against the award made on the preliminary stage, contrary to the announced programme. But the commissioners are backed up by the decision of the expert, Mr. Robert MacArthur, of Philadelphia, that the winning plan was so far ahead of the others that all the rest appeared like mere students' fancies, and the further competition would possibly have no other end than that already reached. Still, the architects declaim eloquently about the "principle" of the thing and "violation of honor."

GRETA.

Dramatic Feuilleton.

Hamlet.—Good, my lord, will you see the players well bestowed?
Polonius.—My lord, I will use them according to their desert.

Hamlet.

THERE was no doubt, no hesitation, about the opening of this season. Every manager, like Cassius, plunged boldly in. Before the equinoctial storm was over, we had two sumptuous Shakespearean revivals, five new plays, Judic, and Mary Anderson.

During the present month we are to be blessed with Italian opera, at the Academy of Music, German opera, at the Thalia, and Salvini, at the Metropolitan.

The advance of theatrical art in this country, and the excellent effects of the missionary visits of Henry Irving, were evident in the spectacular production of "The Comedy of Errors," by Robson and Crane, at the Star Theatre. These two low comedians have been touring the country together for years, making fortunes in such dramatic rubbish as "Sharps and Flats," "Our Boarding-House," and "Forbidden Fruit." All at once they go to Alfred Thompson, the theatrical designer, and authorize him to put "The Comedy of Errors" on the stage regardless of expense. He did it, and did it so well that, during its run of four weeks in New York the